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THE AMERICAN PLAN OF GOVERNMENT. By CHARLES W. BACON, assisted by FRANKLYN S. MORSE. New York: G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS. 1916. pp. xxi, 474.

In this volume the author groups the clauses of the Constitution under appropriate headings and seeks to show the meaning and effect of each clause by quoting extracts from the opinions of the Supreme Court. These extracts are usually apposite, but often the cases from which they are taken are not based on the precise clause which the author is considering. The book is a collection of essays contained in judicial opinions rather than a discussion of legal decisions. The arrangement makes it impossible for a reader to discover from it the law on any constitutional question. The method which the author has adopted indicates that the book is not designed to be of service to lawyers. It is constructed on the model of the dictionary in which the words and phrases of the Constitution are given the definitions which they have received in judicial opinions. The material thus brought together indicates clearly that our actual working constitution of today is in large measure the product of judicial interpretation. The written instrument framed by the Fathers was but the first step. Though Mr. Bacon has shown the significance of the part which the judiciary play in our constitutional system, his book hardly merits the claim made for it by Mr. George Gordon Battle in the Introduction, that it "gives the reader the real meaning of the Constitution". The real meaning of the Constitution cannot be discovered from definitions given to its phrases, even though such definitions appear in official opinions. Its meaning must be found from the specific things which the Constitution has been held to prohibit or permit. The short-cut of general statement is an unsafe substitute for the longer way of painstaking collection, analysis and synthesis of actual decisions. If Mr. Justice Holmes is right that "general propositions do not decide concrete cases", any collection of such general propositions or definitions must fall far short of giving us "the real meaning of the Constitution".

MAGNA CARTA AND OTHER ADDRESSES. By WILLIAM D. GUTHRIE. New York: COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY PRESS. 1916. pp. vi, 282.

In this volume the author has put into permanent form ten addresses made by him on various occasions between the years 1906 and 1915. For the most part they are concerned with problems of constitutional law and of government, and were delivered before such assemblages as the New York State Constitutional Convention, the New York State Bar Association, the Pennsylvania Bar Association. The addresses include among others "Magna Carta", "The Mayflower Compact", "Constitutional Morality", "The Eleventh Amendment", "Criticisms of the Courts", "Nominating Conventions". The "Magna Carta" address was delivered before the Constitutional Convention of the State of New York at its celebration of the 700th anniversary of Magna Carta. Many of the cardinal principles of our system of constitutional law are to be traced back to the Great Charter of 1215; and one readily agrees with the author that there are no Americans to-day "but are big with the privileges of Magna Carta". Throughout these addresses there appears the distrust of the new in our political development, the initiative and referendum, the recall of judges and of judicial decisions, the direct primary. Indeed the attitude of the